

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Illegal Immigrant Sentenced to 210 Months in Prison for His Role in
Distribution of Between 200 to 300 Kilos of Cocaine in Camden

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CAMDEN – A Mexican national was sentenced to 210 months in federal prison today for his role in a conspiracy to distribute approximately 300 kilograms of cocaine and for illegally re-entering the United States after having been previously deported, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Joseph E. Irenas also ordered Alvaro Ramos-Gonzalez, 45, to cooperate with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in deportation efforts upon the completion of his prison sentence.

The charges contained in a two-count Superseding Information, to which Ramos-Gonzalez pleaded guilty on Feb. 14, 2006, stem from a long-term investigation that ended the arrests of six defendants on March 8, 2003, in Philadelphia. At the time of the arrests, agents seized approximately 30 kilograms of cocaine, with an estimated street value of \$5.85 million.

Ramos-Gonzalez pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine, and one count of illegal re-entry into the United States after previously having been deported following his conviction for an aggravated felony.

At his plea hearing, Ramos-Gonzalez admitted his involvement in a drug conspiracy in which hundreds of kilograms of cocaine were driven across the country from Tucson, Ariz., to the Philadelphia/Camden area. Ramos-Gonzalez admitted that during the time period covered in the Superseding Information, February 2002 through March 8, 2003, he agreed with others, including, Carlos Alberto Ramos-Gonzalez, 47, a Mexican national, Jose Francisco Gonzalez-Villa, 46, of Tucson, Ariz., and Peter M. Mellor, 46, of Tucson, Ariz., to transport and distribute the cocaine on behalf of the organization.

Ramos-Gonzalez admitted that in February 2002, his brother Carlos Alberto Ramos-Gonzalez asked Mellor to drive cocaine across the country from Tucson to the Philadelphia/Camden area. Shortly thereafter, at his and Carlos' request, Mellor began making the trips carrying multi-kilogram shipments of cocaine, Ramos-Gonzalez admitted. Ramos-Gonzalez admitted that during the time period covered in the Superseding Information, Mellor transported more than 300 kilograms of cocaine to the Philadelphia/Camden area.

For his part in the conspiracy, Ramos-Gonzalez admitted that he regularly made trips to the Philadelphia/Camden area and back to Tucson. Also, Ramos-Gonzalez admitted that during the trips to the Philadelphia/Camden area, he assisted members of the conspiracy in delivering kilograms of cocaine to Raymond Morales, of Camden, and collecting the proceeds from the drug transaction.

In determining the sentence, Judge Irenas consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, was not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited the member agencies of the Philadelphia/Camden High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (H.I.D.T.A.) Task Force for their work in developing the case. The member agencies include: U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Camden Resident Office; the Camden Police Department, Camden County Prosecutor's Office, The U.S. Attorney's Offices for the Districts of New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania, FBI, New Jersey State Police, Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, Philadelphia Police Department, New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice, Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office, Camden County Sheriff's Department, ATF, Delaware River Port Authority Police, and the New Jersey National Guard Counter-Drug Program, for their work in developing the case.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Diana V. Carrig, of the Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: Gregory Sciolla, Esq. Moorestown